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Mrs. Judy Ferguson Shaw

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March 28, 2016

4.14 CV 2077-RWS

Honorable Judge Rodney W. Sippel
1114 Market Street #802
St. Louis, MO 63101

Re: Missouri NAACP V. Ferguson-Florissant School District

Dear Honorable Judge Sippel:

"What is different about Ferguson-Florissant School District?" are words from court that linger in my brain. Since I cannot get them to go away, I thought that I should address them from my perception. It is its history, racism and classism that define the different from other school districts in the area.

I am Mrs. Judy Ferguson Shaw, a graduate of Berkeley High School and a retired Ferguson-Florissant School District employee after 34 years. My career began as a teacher in the Kinloch School District. During my career I worked at all levels and rounded out my profession as a high school guidance department chair. I sat through the entire court case and learned a lot.

I believe that the Ferguson-Florissant School District is the only district in the area that was court mandated to merge. That merger brought three different school districts together collectively making a new district of 13 cities, but four major cities – Berkeley, Ferguson, Florissant and Kinloch. The merger in the eyes of many was never complete or fair. Patrons/Stake Holders of Berkeley, Kinloch and pockets of Ferguson felt and even feel today that their concerns and issues were often not addressed by the district's leaders; i.e. a middle school housed in an elementary building, every school building in the city of Kinloch closed, bussing largely one way (black children bussed north) causing families to have relationship issues, etc. Currently every poor performing school is located on the south end of the district; except one. In my opinion, this is majorly the result of biased leadership.

Maybe sir, if the district had area representation on the board student achievement would be better and diversity would be certain. I believe many of the decisions that have brought the district to its current performance level would never have happened if we had area representation.

I feel strongly that area representation would bring about the diversity that would bring equity and improved district/student performance.

Sincerely,



Judy Ferguson Shaw
Grade A for Change PAC
Campaign Manager and Treasurer

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